Bill on Right to Information

47. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Press Council of India drafted a bill on the right to information;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to circulate the bill to elicit opinion of villagers; and

(c) the steps proposed to enlighten villagers about minimum wages, women's rights and environmental issues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) With a view to introduce greater transparency and openness in functioning of Government and public bodies, the Government had, in January, 1997, constituted a Working Group on 'Right to Information and Promotion of Open and Transparent Government'. The draft Bill on 'Right to Information' received from the press Council of India was made available to the Working Group for consideration during its deliberations. The Working Group has submitted a draft Bill on Freedom of Information.

Ad-Hoc Employees in Publications Division

48. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) had in 1992 directed the Publication Division of this Ministry to regularise the services of its employees who were working on ad-hoc basis for several years, and also asked the authorities to absorb these employees in other departments if there were no vacancies in the Publications Division; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for not doing so, till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No sir.

(b) Does not arise.